

31st Fighter Wing: The U.S. Air Force's fighter wing south of the Alps

# THE VIGILEER

Vol. 52 No. 11

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Aviano Air Base, Italy

## Fly Bys

### Vehicle inspections

The 31st Logistics Readiness Squadron is offering courtesy vehicle inspections through Thursday in the Aviano industrial area. The inspection is open to all U.S. ID card holders. For more information, call Ext. 4458 or 8095.

### Aviano Clean Up Day

The community of Aviano is hosting its annual Clean Up Day April 2. Volunteers are encouraged to call Rigo Damiano at Ext. 5724 or Capt. Daniel Barosso at Ext. 5394 to sign up; however, everyone is welcome to meet at 8 a.m. in front of the main stadium in Aviano (near the Casa Bianca Restaurant). Gloves and bags will be provided. Volunteers are reminded to wear sturdy shoes and long pants. Pasta and refreshments will be served at 1 p.m. at the main stadium for the volunteers.

### Free music

Recording artist Dan Myers is visiting Aviano for an evening of praise and worship at 6 p.m. Sunday in the Area One chapel. For more information, call Ext. 5211.

## Air Force adds more career options to vMPF

By Senior Airman  
Colleen Wronek

31st Fighter Wing Public Affairs

When the Air Force adds more options to the Virtual MPF site on March 31, it will allow servicemembers to take more control of their careers.

The program, called personnel services delivery transformation, will allow 24/7 computer access to personnel information from anywhere in the world and will eliminate multiple visits to the military personnel flight or squadron commander support staff.

"The transformation saves Airmen time because they aren't waiting for service," said Capt. Chris Busque, 31st Mission Support Squadron MPF commander.

The online personnel transaction concept isn't new. The Air Force already uses several Web-based programs for personnel transactions including LeaveWeb and myPay.

"It's like banking online," Captain Busque said. "About 10 years ago we had to write checks and visit the bank to get cash. Now, people rarely go inside a bank. Most people bank online or use an ATM, which is more convenient, saves

See vMPF , Page 7



Photo by Senior Airman Colleen Wronek

### Charitable Aviano

Capt. Eric Cuebas, Air Force Assistance Fund deputy installation project officer, marks the final block of the AFAF thermometer. By the third week of the campaign, the 31st Fighter Wing had already reached the \$80,000 goal. Donations are still being accepted through April 7.

**Daylight savings:** Europe practices daylight savings the last Sunday in March. Remember to move clocks ahead one hour Sunday.

### 31st FW Sortie Board

sortie: n, a flight of a combat aircraft on a mission

	Hours	Sorties
31st FW goal	1109.5	857
	<b>+180.6</b>	<b>+87</b>

Information current as of Thursday.



### Women

For Women's History Month, Aviano women tell what it's like to work in male-dominated career fields.

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### Explore Milan

The historic city of Milan, or Milano, is famous for ornate architecture, good shopping, fashion and Leonardo da Vinci's Last Supper.

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## Letter to Airmen: OIF anniversary

To the Airmen of the United States Air Force, March 19 marked the third anniversary of Operation Iraqi Freedom and the removal of an oppressive, dangerous regime. This was the culmination of a joint and coalition intense effort on land, sea, and air. I want to take this moment to say thanks for all your sacrifices ... and to let you know that you are doing awesome work. In OIF, within the Joint Force, our Total Force active, guard, and reserve Airmen – grounded the Iraqi air force, destroyed the combat effectiveness of the Iraqi ground forces, blinded the Hussein leadership and paved the way for a series of ground battles that saw Baghdad fall in 22 days. Your innovation and flexibility made the difference, whether it was Airmen decisively striking Republican Guard formations; in orbits over every Iraqi airfield; embedded with ground forces; launching and orbiting satellites high overhead; controlling armed UAVs; or airlifting critical supplies and troops. And today, you continue to provide air support to the Combatant Commanders around the world, while also flawlessly performing non-traditional missions like base defense and convoy operations.

Your contributions to the spread of freedom and democracy did not begin three years ago; the Air Force has been at war continuously for more than 15 years – since the opening rounds of Operation Desert Storm and through 12 years of no-fly zone operations. And although Iraq is receiving the majority of attention, Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Noble Eagle remain critical to winning this Long War. The Global War on Terror has now lasted 10 months longer than our Nation fought in World War II. This is a joint fight, across the world — where we have

a vital role. Meanwhile, things have been fairly quiet on the home front, and that's good. That means we are doing our job well. You are protecting America by monitoring intelligence, sitting alert, and flying patrols over our cities. By protecting our homeland and fighting the enemy on their turf, you are keeping your family, friends, and the American public safe. Our mission is to fly and fight and win our nations' wars – and you're doing just that.

You are making a difference. I am proud of you. America is proud of you. You are helping to rebuild countries and protect fledgling democracies in Iraq and Afghanistan, while keeping America out of harm's way. Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, the Pakistani earthquake, Philippine landslides and, most recently, floods in Hawaii, brought out your best as well, as you pitched in side by side with allies and joint partners providing humanitarian relief across the globe and in our own backyard. You are the most combat experienced, battle-hardened Airmen since WWII. You are successfully doing whatever is asked of you across the domains of air, space, and cyberspace – you are always there.

Thanks for all that you're doing – it matters. Your tireless efforts keep this the best Air Force the world has ever seen, ready to lead or support the joint fight anywhere, anytime. You are making it happen in Iraq, Afghanistan, in the skies over America, and anywhere our Nation needs us. Keep it up and keep 'em flying!

  
T. MICHAEL MOSELEY  
General, USAF  
Chief of Staff

### Aviano Airman of the Week

**Name:** Airman 1st Class Alejandro Hernandez

**Unit:** 31st Logistics Readiness Squadron

**Job:** Logistics planner

**Hometown:** San Juan, Texas

**Family:** Mother, father, two older brothers and a younger sister

**Hobbies:** Skateboarding, playing the guitar, art and tennis

**Why joined:** His family is military and for the college benefits



# Put it in park: Leave the GOV at work

By Senior Airman Sarah Gregory  
31st Fighter Wing Public Affairs

Italy's numerous road signs and narrow streets can make driving a complicated and difficult process at best. But for Aviano members operating a government-owned vehicle, the rules are simple.

"Government-owned vehicles are for official use only," said Staff Sgt. Kory Kearney, 31st Logistics Readiness Squadron NCO in charge of AFI/GOV licensing. "People are taking GOVs to the base exchange and the dining facilities, which are not authorized locations. If a GOV driver is passing by one of those establishments and they think it's okay to stop for food, they're wrong."

Since the beginning of the current fiscal year, more than 50 cases of vehicle misuse have been reported to the vehicle operations flight. While GOV misuse is a common problem, Sergeant Kearney said the high numbers of instances is due to a lack of knowledge.

"Most of the time people aren't aware they are breaking any rules," he said. "The two main areas where we see infractions are at eating establishments and the off-limits road."

Just like any rule, there are exceptions to this GOV policy.

"Because they aren't permanently assigned here and don't have their own vehicles, TDY personnel are allowed to use GOVs to visit the commissary and dining facility," explained Tech. Sgt. Roy Hensley, 31st LRS vehicle operations supervisor.

To take a GOV to an eating establishment, Aviano permanent party members must have approval from the installation commander.

"Currently, the only units authorized to stop by eating establishments with a GOV are 31st Security Forces Squadron's emergency responders and the 31st Civil Engineer Squadron's fire department personnel," said Sergeant Kearney.

Whether civilian or military, if an Aviano member is caught misusing a GOV, they are subject to stiff penalties.

"After a GOV misuse incident is reported to us, we notify the using member's commander, who conducts an investigation," Sergeant Kearney said. "It's up to the commander to determine if there was actual GOV misuse."

## Important Tips

It's everyone's responsibility to report GOV misuse, even if they're not sure the activity qualifies as misuse. Report the plate number, location, time, suspected infraction and the name and rank of the driver if possible to Ext. 7449.

Beginning April 1, a second shuttle will run during the weekly lunch period. The second shuttle will run in reverse, allowing people to ride back to their place of work from eating establishments, without having to ride the full route of the current shuttle.

If it's decided that a member has committed GOV misuse, Sergeant Kearney said punishments for military members can range from discipline under the UCMJ to administrative punishment such as letters of counseling or reprimand.

"Civilians can be suspended from duty by the Secretary of the Air Force without pay for up to one month. If the violations are reoccurring, the punishments get harsher," he added.

Following the GOV driving rules will not only keep people from getting into trouble, but it's also a Fraud, Waste and Abuse matter, said Sergeant Hensley.

"The extra driving and stops cause wear and tear on the vehicle and tires, and it wastes fuel," he said. "In addition, taxpayers are paying for that extra trip to the BX or dining facility and the man-hours spent researching the misuse is time wasted."

Although members can't take GOVs to eating establishments, there are still ways for them to get around at mealtimes.

"There is a shuttle bus to take people to the dining facility, the mass briefing facility and other areas of the base, including Areas One and Two," said Master Sgt. Andy Meyers, 31st LRS vehicle operations superintendent. "If people have suggestions for improvements, they can use the LRS commander's suggestion box located on the LRS Web page."

The shuttle bus schedule and the commander's suggestion box can both be found on the 31st LRS home Web page on the Aviano Intranet by going to Mission Support in the organizations box and clicking on Logistics Readiness.

**Aviano 5/6:** Aviano's 5/6 meets at 3 p.m. the second Tuesday of every month in Bldg. 220 in Area Two. Call Ext. 1089 for information.

## Smart Operations 21 charges into USAFE

By 1st Lt. S.K. Nielsen  
USAFE Public Affairs

Is there a better way to do something or get something done in the Air Force? Air Force Smart Operations for the 21st century is an initiative to improve processes that contribute to our ability to employ air, space and cyberspace power in support of our combatant commanders and eliminate activities, actions and policies that do not support our core competencies.

"Everything we do is process work. We need to eliminate as much non-value added work within these processes as possible, at both the functional level and across the entire enterprise. Successfully implementing and sustaining AFSO 21 will be the

keys to improving service, reducing costs and enriching the lives of our Airmen," said Col. Theodore Eaton, USAFE deputy director of logistics.

Across USAFE, organizations are looking at the way they perform operations and looking for ways to improve them. Everything from consolidated telephone operations, help desk operations, and even improving C-130 engine propeller repair cycle time are just some of the changes already showing improvements in USAFE.

"Institutionalizing process improvement as part of our operating style will allow the Air Force to meet the enormous challenges we face over the next decade and ultimately help modernize and sustain the world's best air and

space force," said Colonel Eaton.

AFSO 21 will create a fundamental cultural change where all Airmen understand their individual role in improving our daily processes and contribute to the Air Force mission, and where all senior leaders and commanders understand their role in removing barriers for their Airmen that inhibit improved mission effectiveness and efficiencies.

"We want Airmen to be fully aware of the importance of their work and how it contributes to the mission; Airmen must look to improve what they do every day," said Steve Jewett, USAFE AFSO 21 cell leader. "We want Airmen to see their role in a fundamentally different way: by focusing on increasing value and eliminating waste."

# Help desk service to change, move to USAFE

By Senior Airman  
Sarah Gregory

31st Fighter Wing Public Affairs

Change is coming to Aviano. It's a small change and may not be immediately noticeable to computer users, but the first time someone has a computer problem and they reach for the phone, it becomes noticeable.

It's not cause for wide-spread panic, but the Aviano help desk service will be eliminated in mid-April.

"The help desk as the base knows it is going away," said Tech. Sgt. Allen Churchill, 31st Communications Squadron NCO in charge of the help desk. "The service will be picked up by the U.S. Air Forces in Europe consolidated help desk service."

The consolidation of USAFE help desks is designed to streamline the computer diagnosis and repair process by providing one place for all of USAFE to call with problems.

"The USAFE consolidated help desk will provide 24/7 standardized customer support throughout the entire com-

mand," said Capt. Tiffany Ferrell, 31st CS chief of the network control center. "The CHD initiative falls in step with similar consolidation efforts across the Air Force to provide the most efficient and cost-effective processes to satisfy customer requests. These exciting times are just the beginning stages of a new way of conducting business across the Air Force."

As the second USAFE base to come on board with the new consolidated system, client server administrators will have to be brought up to date with how the changes will affect them and their customers. To help them with the change, the USAFE consolidated help desk will be giving Aviano CSAs a briefing Thursday and March 31.

"The new system will be better for Aviano computer users, because people can call the help desk themselves instead of going through their client server administrator like they are required to do now," Sergeant Churchill said. "It will be the 'one-stop shop' for all computer problems and will provide the same type of services that we have been."

Beginning April 17, a three-week phasing schedule will be implemented to switch customers over to the new integrated system. The first two weeks is for Aviano support units and the last week will convert the rest of the main units here.

"For many of the daily operators, the new call center shouldn't be a problem," said Sergeant Churchill. "It might be hard for the larger computer system users at first because the USAFE help desk members don't know the Aviano specifics. It will be a growing process."

While the disbanding of the Aviano help desk should make getting computer problems fixed quicker and easier, it also has the added benefit of making life easier for the 31st CS help desk members.

"This will help us because we won't have to be at 24-hour manning and people will be able to have holiday time off," Sergeant Churchill said. "It will definitely improve shop morale."

Beginning in mid-April, the new USAFE consolidated help desk can be reached at DSN 480-1777.

**Enlisted promotions:** The next 31st Fighter Wing enlisted promotion ceremony is at 2 p.m. Thursday in the La Bella Vista club.

## vMPF, from page 1

time and saves the hassle of writing checks."

Captain Busque said the new applications added to the vMPF are secure. "The Air Force Personnel Center has thoroughly tested each application and brought in experts to try to break the system," he said. "They will not accept an application until it's been tested. It's going to be secure, as all other Air Force systems are."

Each online personnel action will be user-friendly and have helpful information. MPF and CSS functions that will be Web-based beginning March 31 include accessions, military records corrections, evaluation appeals, duty history and status.

Because personnel actions will be controlled by Airmen, MPF and CSS staffing will become smaller. Those personnel will be responsible for programs not Web-based and will assist Airmen and commanders with Web-based programs as needed.

Airmen can access all Web-based MPF programs through the Air Force Portal. Once in the portal, they can visit the vMPF by choosing the 'Life and Career' tab and then 'Career.' All Airmen should have an Air Force Portal account by March 31.

"It'll be nice not to visit the MPF as much," said Senior Airman Jason Gregory, 31st Communications Squadron base installation security systems maintainer. "And it's a good thing to have access to personnel issues no matter where you're at."

Airmen needing vMPF support or help with Web-based programs, can call the contact center from home or work 24 hours a day, seven days a week. To call the Air Force contact center from Italy, dial 800-172-444 then 1-800-616-3775 or visit [www.afpc.randolph.af.mil](http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil).

"Conducting personnel transactions online will take a while to get used to but in the long run it will be more efficient and convenient for the customer," Captain Busque said.



Photo by Airman Nathan Doza

## Customer service

Senior Airman Shanera Bullock, 31st Mission Support Squadron, gives Command Chief Master Sergeant Pamela Lane, 31st Fighter Wing command chief, her new ID card.

The Military Personnel Flight has a new way for customers to make ID card appointments. Military members can make appointments online by visiting the Aviano Intranet page and choosing 'Sign up' and then 'ID card appointment application.' Once a date and time is chosen, military members will receive a confirmation e-mail.

The online service isn't available for dependents, but the MPF will take dependent walk-ins. For more information, call Ext. 4715.



*When your day is stressful and you want to scream and shout  
heres a 'Little Dang-it Doll' that you can't live without, as a ...*

# Grandmother makes stress dolls for troops

**By Tech. Sgt.**

**Jerome Baysmore**

*31st Fighter Wing Public Affairs*

When stress levels rise, some turn to exercise at the Dragon Fitness Center, Aviano Health and Wellness Center or mull things over with a chaplain.

Now, Aviano has another outlet to turn to – “Dang-it Dolls” – and their official name has been changed to protect the innocent.

Because none of the hand-made dolls look exactly alike, they each take on a personality of their own.

The dolls work to relieve stress because their recipients can confide in them, yell at them or just beat them up. The dolls never argue, are very forgiving, and they can never tell secrets. The dolls come with a little poem pinned on them:

*When your day is stressful  
And you want to scream and shout  
Here's a "Little Dang-it Doll"  
That you can't live without  
Grasp it firmly by the legs  
And find a place to slam it!!  
As you whack its stuffing out,  
Yell "Dang-it, Dang-it, Dang-it"*

“Operation Dang-it Doll” is a project that happened by accident,” said Carol Davis. “Many years ago, someone gave me a doll, and I came across it again a few months ago. I decided to make some for my family and friends as

gag Christmas gifts.

“I sent two to my grandson, [Airman 1st Class Thomas Hagmaier, 31st Maintenance Squadron] who is stationed in Italy, and one to a family friend, Larry, who is deployed in Iraq from our National Guard Unit here,” the Columbia, S.C., native and military supporter said.

Ms. Davis said she was sure Airman Hagmaier would complain because she sent him dolls. Instead, he wanted to know if he sent her money, would she buy more.

“I told him I had made them and would be happy to make a few more, and asked how many people wanted one. He said, ‘Everyone!’ And I got the same response from Larry.

“I decided, if my silly dolls brought that much joy to our servicemen and women, I would see that all who wanted one would have one,” she said. “We will continue to make and ship dolls to our military as long as there is a need.”

Airman Hagmaier agreed on the need for more dolls because maintenance squadron Airmen always turn to him for more.

“I get asked all the time, but I don’t mind it,” he said. “I think it’s a morale booster for people overseas – it keeps a smile on my face.

“Everywhere I go, I see these dolls all over the place. People have them up on the walls or hanging from the ceilings.”

Airman Hagmaier said his grand-



Courtesy photos

Carol Davis stuffs a stress doll in South Carolina. She started making them to raise service-members’ morale overseas and she has shipped over 4,000 dolls worldwide.

mother has shipped more than 4,000 dolls to Iraq, Kuwait, Korea, Afghanistan, local South Carolina bases and Italy since 2005. He also stressed the cost of the dolls – they’re free.

“These dolls are not for sale, nor are they for anyone else,” Ms. Davis said. “They are free and only for our wonderful young men and women serving our country with honor.

“This is a labor of love and an on going project.”

Ms. Davis and the volunteers in S.C. were interviewed and featured on a TV station in February 2005, which spread their story. Soon, they were flooded with donated materials and help, but the group doesn’t accept any cash donations.

“If someone wants to help us with shipping – which is the biggest expense – we do allow them to take the boxes to the post office and mail them for us.

“Bear in mind, these are not just pretty faces to be set on a desk and collect dust,” she said. “They are to be ‘used and abused,’ and replacements are readily available for the asking. It is just our way of sending a little piece of home to them and let them know we are behind them and love them.”

Servicemembers who would like a stress doll, can e-mail Airman Hagmaier at [thomas.hagmaier@aviano.af.mil](mailto:thomas.hagmaier@aviano.af.mil).



‘Dang-it’ dolls come with a poem attached and a note that thanks servicemembers for their service.

# AVIANO WOMEN ON THE JOB

Women have been serving in the armed forces since before they had won the right to vote. From the military nurses of WWI to the pilots of the modern War on Terrorism, women have always played a role in military operations. Despite their numerous contributions to the armed forces, it wasn't until Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm that the role of women in the military passed another milestone. For the first time, women were involved in combat operations, proving they were capable to handle some of the same jobs as their male counterparts. Since then, more and more career fields have been opened up to women.

Today, 99 percent of all Air Force occupations, ranging from crew chief to plumber, are open to women. Here are just a few of those women serving right here at Aviano.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Michael Holzworth



Photo by Staff Sgt. Michael Holzworth

## Staff Sgt. Stela Striligas

- 31st Aerospace Medicine Squadron
- Bioenvironmental engineering craftsman
- In the Air Force for 5 years
- Currently pursuing a master's degree in Public Health from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and plans to become a Public Health officer.

**"The most rewarding part about my job is being a mentor and supervising two young troops. As a leader, you're not always liked and sometimes the best decisions are the hardest ones to make – but in the end I know I've given my troops the tools they need to successfully complete their next challenge."**



## Airman 1st Class

- 31st Civil Engineer Squadron
- Utilities systems journeyman (plumber)
- In the Air Force for 2 years and 9 months
- Best part of her job: "I am never bored; everyday there is something new. Some aspects of the job are totally gross, but we try to have a sense of humor about it. The best part of my job would probably be the people I work with; they are all crazy."

**"Guys are always good to work with because they will do anything to help you. I never really had a bad day because there is always something that cracks me up."**





Photo by Tech. Sgt. Randy Mallard



Photo by Staff Sgt. Michael Holzworth

## Tech. Sgt. Kristen Hickey

- 31st Communications Squadron
- NCO in charge of C2/wideband systems
- In the Air Force for 13-and-a-half years
- Best part of her job? "The great group of Airmen I have working for me. Supporting our mission is very exciting, but being in a management position, I don't get the opportunity to work on the equipment as much as I would like; so to see my troops succeed and be recognized for their accomplishments is very rewarding."

"I enjoy working in a shop that is mostly men. I find that we have a great deal of camaraderie – it's like having 13 brothers. As a young Airman, I had to prove to the guys that I could handle the same work that they were required to do and I had to do it without complaining about breaking a nail or sweating through my make-up."



Photo by Staff Sgt. Michael Holzworth

## s Krista Benson



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Randy Mallard



Photo by Staff Sgt. Michael Holzworth



Photo by Staff Sgt. Michael Holzworth

## Airman 1st Class Jessica Wenz

- 31st Maintenance Squadron
- Assistant dedicated crew chief
- In the Air Force for 2 years
- Best part of her job: "Watching the jets take off."

"Working with mostly guys can definitely be interesting at times. Let's just say there are some memorable conversations in the truck."

For a laugh. It is like to get a laugh out of have a bad day at work, someone doing some-

## Bazaar

A Spring Fling Bazaar is from 3 to 7 p.m. today, 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Saturday and 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday at the La Bella Vista Club. Vendors will sell wine, furniture, paintings, carpets, jewelry and other goods.

## Into the Woods

The Aviano Community Theater presents Stephen Sondheim's "Into the Woods" at 7 p.m. today, Saturday, March 31 and April 1 and 2 p.m. Sunday and April 2 in the Aviano High School multipurpose room. The cost is \$8 for adults and \$5 for students. All proceeds go to future show productions. For more information, call Ext. 5076.

## Nutrition

March is National Nutrition Month and Aviano's Health and Wellness Center is holding a healthy cooking class from 10 to 11 a.m. Tuesday. To sign up or for more information, call Ext. 4573.

## School registration

School registration for all returning students in grades

one through 12 is from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Tuesday and Wednesday in the Aviano Elementary School gym. Parents must sign up for school transportation with the school bus office and must reapply for free and reduced lunches with the school's officer.

For more information, call the following offices: Aviano Elementary School at Ext. 5616; Aviano Middle School at Ext. 5777; Aviano High School at Ext. 5877; School Bus Office at Ext. 5152; and School Officer at Ext. 5261.

## Seminar

A free one-hour seminar on identifying civilian job opportunities in command, control, communications, computers, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance is at 1 p.m. Thursday at the family support center. To sign up, call Ext. 5768 or 5656.

## Music

The U.S. Air Forces in Europe Band will perform at 1:45 p.m. March 31 at the Aviano Elementary School.

The band will also host a musician's clinic with the Aviano Music Club to teach

people about music from 6 to 8 p.m. March 31 at the community center. For more information on the musicians clinic, call Master Sgt. Luis Adams at Ext. 7975, Tech. Sgt. Manuela Henning at Ext. 4115 or Jeffrey Davis at Ext. 5993.

## Women's History

The Women's History Month luncheon is at 11 a.m. Wednesday at the La Bella Vista Club. To purchase tickets, call Tech. Sgt. Georgina Francis at Ext. 5688.

## Road work

The pavement makings in Area F are scheduled to be repainted from Monday through May 25. The dates are subject to change due to weather and other circumstances. People must not park in coned areas. For more information, call Ext. 6018.

## Technology expo

A technology exposition is from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. April 7 in the La Bella Vista Club. The free expo will have 20 exhibitors demonstrating their latest technologies.

## Thrift shop

The Aviano Thrift Shop takes consignments from 10 a.m. to 12:45 p.m. Tuesdays and Wednesdays. Donations are accepted from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesdays and Wednesdays. For more information, call Ext. 5428.

## Student deployment

Aviano Elementary School students who's parents are currently deployed or just returned from a deployment can participate in a simulated deployment from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. April 6. For more information or to receive a permission slip, e-mail kristine.kessler@eu.dodea.edu. Permission slips must be received by Thursday.

## Easter pageant

The Aviano Community Choir needs singers, actors, backstage hands, set builders and other volunteers for an Easter pageant at 3:30 p.m. April 2 and 6:45 p.m. April 3

in the base theater. Rehearsals are at 3 p.m. Sundays and at 7 p.m. Wednesdays at Aviano Baptist Church, at the corner of Via Mazzini and Via Nardo in Aviano. Child care is available during rehearsals and dinner is provided after Sunday practices. For more information, call Robin Watts at 348-520-0655 or 0434-65-2278 or Master Sgt. Carl Schlender at Ext. 8652.

## Egg hunt

Volunteers are needed from 8 to 11:30 a.m. April 8 for the annual Easter egg hunt in Freedom Park. Volunteer duties include set up, clean up and assistance during the egg hunt. For more information or to volunteer, call Dave Labonte at Ext. 5823 or 7575.

## Spouse scholarships

The National Military Family Association is accepting applications for Joanne Holbrook Patton Military Spouse Scholarships. Any uniformed service spouse – active duty, retired, National Guard, Reserve, or survivor – studying toward professional certification or attending post-secondary or graduate school may apply. Applications are online at [www.nmfa.org/scholarships2006](http://www.nmfa.org/scholarships2006) and will only be accepted online. The deadline to apply is April 15.

## Tuition Assistance

Online tuition assistance is mandatory for all active duty personnel. Airmen requesting tuition assistance must have a degree plan on file with the education center. Tuition assistance may only be used for courses that fit in the degree program. For more information or for instructions on how to apply, call the education center at Ext. 5330.

## Education

The University of Phoenix is accepting enrollments for the Master of Business Administration and the Master of Arts in Education degree programs. For more information, visit the education center or call Ext. 5139 or 5605.

## Reel Times

**Today, 7 p.m.** - "When a Stranger Calls" Rated PG-13 - While babysitting, a high school student is terrorized by a stranger who calls her asking "Have you checked the children lately?" Police eventually discover the calls are coming from inside the house. Starring: Camilla Belle, Katie Cassidy

**Saturday, 7 p.m.** - "The Last Holiday" Rated PG-13 - A shy sales clerk with a fatal disease takes a European vacation to live out the rest of her life. With nothing to lose, her behavior gets more outrageous every day until she discovers she was misdiagnosed. Starring: Queen Latifah, L.L. Cool J

**Sunday, 7 p.m.** - "Hostel" Rated R - Two adventurous college buddies backpack through Europe and are lured by a fellow traveler to visit a hostel in a Slovakian town. Starring: Jay Hernandez, Derek Richardson

**Wednesday, 7 p.m.** - "When a Stranger Calls" Rated PG-13

**Thursday, 7 p.m.** - "The Last Holiday" Rated PG-13

*(Titles and times are courtesy of [www.aafes.com](http://www.aafes.com), and are subject to change.)*



# Milan offers a glimpse into a turbulent, wealthy past

**Story and photo by  
Senior Airman Sarah Gregory  
31st Fighter Wing Public Affairs**

Perhaps best known as the city of fashion, Milan has a lot more to offer visitors.

As the business and industrial hub of Italy, Milan is a prosperous, modern city. Since it also has one of the biggest international airports, the best subway system and the most railway connections in the country, getting to and around Milan is no problem. However modern the city is, the streets can be difficult to navigate and parking downtown is nearly impossible, so driving to Milan is not recommended.

For fashion-minded people, Milan is a shopper's paradise. At the northern end of Piazza della Scala is a shopping district known as Quadrilatero, the Golden Triangle. Here shoppers can spend a paycheck or two or just look longingly at the great Italian designers such as Armani and Versace. Shops are normally open from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. and 4 to 7:30 p.m. For more affordable shops, wander around the Brera district, located a few blocks to the west of the Golden Triangle. No matter where visitors shop, they're sure to find something; Milan produces the majority of Italy's shoes and clothing.

Besides fashion, Milan has plenty of architecture and culture to offer Gothic and Renaissance fans. Although considered by many to be more European than Italian, Milan's contributions to Italian history and art can still be found beneath the polished and commercial atmosphere.

A great place to begin exploring that history is at the Castello Sforzesco, or Castle Sforza. Construction on the castle originally began in 1450 by Francesco Sforza, the fourth Duke of Milan and one of the city's condottiere, or hired mercenaries. Although it has been destroyed and rebuilt several times, the fortress-like castle still shows signs of the two powerful families who ruled Milan in the 14th century – the Visconti and Sforza dynasties. On the front of the castle is the Visconti family emblem: a viper with its jaws open wide swallowing a child. The design of the castle shows evidence of turbulent times in which the Visconti and Sforza families ruled. Rows of seemingly decorative arches line the outer walls that were actually built to disguise holes used for pouring boiling oil on attacking forces.



The Duomo Cathedral took more than 400 years to build and is adorned with 135 marble spires and 2,245 marble statues – none of which are identical.

The castle walls were also constructed with strategically-placed square openings that could be used for scaffolding to make repairs on the roof and walls easier.

At the back of the castle, visitors can see what remains of the secret passageway the duke and his family could use to escape during times of trouble. The hallway leads from the interior rooms out to the moat and continues all the way to the church of Santa Maria delle Grazie, which is where Leonardo da Vinci's "The Last Supper" is housed. Because da Vinci chose to paint the fresco with oil pigments on dry plaster instead of working with the traditional wet plaster method, the painting rapidly deteriorated. After restorers spent years cleaning and re-touching the painting, its original colors have been brought back to life. Reservations are required to view the work and should be made several weeks in advance for weekend visits.

The castle grounds are open to the public from 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Tuesday through Sunday and admission is free. For more information, visit [www.milanocastello.it](http://www.milanocastello.it). The Santa Maria delle Grazie is open from 8 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. Tuesday through Sunday and costs €6,50 with an additional €1,50 reservation fee. Call 02-89421146 to make reservations.

Another main attraction is the Duomo Cathedral located in the Piazza del Duomo. The largest Gothic cathedral in Italy, the Duomo took more than 400 years to complete. Construction began in 1386 by Galeazzo Visconti III and was not completed until just before Napoleon's coronation as king of Italy in 1809. Made completely of white marble brought through an extensive network of canals from quarries near Lake Maggiore, the outside as well as the inside of the Duomo is an amazing sight to see. Inside the cathedral, colorful stained glass windows depicting the life of the Virgin Mary are displayed. Also inside is the famous St. Bartholomew sculpture, which portrays the saint – who was flayed alive – draped in his own skin.

While not the traditional relaxed Italian town, visitors can still experience the artistic and often turbulent history that made Milan into the city it is today. For more information on attractions and restaurants, visit [www.milaninfotourist.it](http://www.milaninfotourist.it).

**Looking to explore?** Check out travel advisories, restrictions and other travel information at [usembasy.state.gov](http://usembasy.state.gov) before a trip.



Courtesy photo

The beaches of the **French Riviera**, or Cote d'Azur, are known as the hottest and most glamorous places to tan.

## Information, Tickets and Travel

Upcoming tours from the Information, Tickets and Travel office include:

- Saturday – Guided San Marino
  - Saturday – Guided Salzburg and Sound of Music tour
  - April 1 – Guided Lugano, Switzerland
  - April 1-2 – Wine tasting in Tuscany
  - April 7-9 – French Riviera
- ITT escorts ensure the group arrives

and departs from the destination as scheduled and will do everything possible to make the trip safe and comfortable. Escorts also provide general information about the area. Please note weather conditions and dress accordingly for trips. The ITT staff recommends wearing comfortable shoes because almost all tours involve walking.

Call Ext. 5072 or 5026 for more information.

# Swimming across Europe



Courtesy photo

Jack Schrader, Aviano Sea Dragon team member, competes in the European Forces Swim League Championships. Schrader received three medals at the championships in February.

## Swim team competes at EFSL

By Ken Godden

31st Fighter Wing Public Affairs

The Aviano Sea Dragon swim team brought home 22 medals during the European Forces Swim League Championships in Riccione, Italy, Feb. 18-19.

The championships brought together 19 swim teams from across Europe. The Sea Dragons had 16 swimmers, ages 6 to 19, competing.

"It was great to see the kids' hard work pay off," said Steve Bagley, Aviano Sea Dragon President. "Seeing them up on the award stand every time they won a medal was one of the most memorable events of this championship."

Coaching the 2005-2006 team for the win was Michelle Bishop, Stephen Ciotti and Alex Simmons.

"While it takes the combined effort of swimmers, parents and volunteers to have a successful season, the team would like to provide a special thanks to its coaches," Bagley said.

Although the 2005-2006 season is over, the team is preparing for the 2006-2007 season and is looking for interested swimmers and coaches.

"Next year proves to be just as exciting. In January, we are scheduled to host the EFSL Southern Division championships at Aviano," Bagley said.

He also said there are many benefits of being a Sea Dragon. "They get to travel throughout Europe while competing against other EFSL teams. Last season the team traveled to Vicenza, Naples, Sigonella, Riccione, Berlin and Rota for swim meets. Even though next year's schedule has not been established, England and Belgium are likely to be on the schedule."

Bagley said the Sea Dragons also get the added benefit of exercise. "This past year we swam three to five times per week both in the summer swim program and during our competition season," he said.

The athletes must go through rigorous training before they are allowed to compete in as a Sea Dragon. "We have a swim test to ensure they're ready to swim in our practices. As long as they pass the test, we teach them the mechanics of different strokes. Unfortunately we don't teach children who have no swimming skills," Bagley said.

People interested in joining or coaching the Aviano Sea Dragons can call Steve Bagley at Ext. 7664. For more information, visit <http://seadragons.sivart.net>.

### Congratulations

*Congratulations to the following Aviano Sea Dragons who received medals at the European Forces Swim League championships:*

- Jessica Corder received five medals including the EFSL Pentathlon award in the 17-19 year group.
- Tori Bishop received two medals
- Adam Chavez received one medal
- Taylor Crafton received one medal
- Killian Hennessy received two medals
- Caitlin Homstad received one medal
- Kaliegh Homstad received one medal
- Tyler Pratt received four medals
- Emma Reddy received one medal
- Jack Schrader received three medals
- Aline Villanueva received one medal

## Fly Bys

### Golf tournament

A golf tournament begins at 8:30 a.m. April 7 at the Alpine Golf Course. The cost is \$22 per person and prizes are awarded for first through third place. For more information or to sign up, call Ext. 7696 or Ext. 7386.

### Volksmarch

The Aviano Road Runners are participating in a Volksmarch at 8 a.m. Sunday. The group leaves the Bar Municipio in Roveredo and heads to Meduno. For more information, call Ext. 7692 or 7404.

### Dodgeball

The 31st Security Forces Squadron Spouse's Group is hosting a dodgeball tournament from 8 a.m. to noon April 15 in the Dragon Fitness Center. Teams consist of at least six members and the cost per team is \$25. Volunteer referees are also needed. For more information or to sign up, call Jackie Jalomo at 347-041-5519 or Christine Hall at 392-142-8068.

### Bike race

A mountain bike race is at 11 a.m. April 8 at Campo Delta, which is near Area 2 and off of mountain highway. Check-in time is 10 a.m. A road race is at 9 a.m. April 9 and starts at the 603rd parking lot. Check-in time is 8 a.m.

For more information, visit <http://www.armedforcescycling.org/Regional/USFEYC/Aviano.htm>.

### Soccer tournament

The Italian air force command section is organizing a soccer tournament this spring. They would like to form teams of five or seven players composed of U.S. and local nationals to play on the weekends. To sign up, call Italian air force Master Sgt. Gaetano Picierro at Ext. 7038.

# What happens to some good Airmen

By Lt. Col. Benny Martin  
355th Security Forces Squadron

**D**AVIS-MONTHAN AIR FORCE BASE, Ariz. — Every time I review a discharge package for a young Airman who went down the wrong path, I ask myself how we failed.

That's right, how did we fail? You may think I am a bit off, since it was the Airman who violated the standards, not the rest of us. It was the Airman who showed up late for work or failed to make a mandatory appointment, not us.

So how did the Airman ever get to the point of being discharged? After all, the Airman made it through our basic training.

After the Airmen finish basic training they head off, in most cases, to their technical school. Granted, the reins are loosened up a bit, but they are still held to a high standard, and they have to be focused to pass the academic portion of their technical schools.

Finally, the Airmen arrive at their first duty station. Maybe they are lucky enough to have a sponsor appointed before they arrive. Maybe their sponsor actually meets them (in uniform) at the airport, and maybe their sponsor takes the time to sit down and go over the standards and expectations before turning them loose. Maybe not.

Here is how the scenario usually plays out. Their sponsor shows up to meet them in shorts and a T-shirt. It's easy to spot "their troop" because our Airman shows up proudly wearing a service dress uniform.

The sponsor walks over to Airman Newbie and introduces himself/herself.

After gathering Airman Newbie's luggage comes the ride to base, during which Bill explains to Tom how terrible things can be. After all, there are countless exercises, inspections, deployments, visits and long hours because many Airmen in the shop are deployed.

Then Bill introduces Tom to everyone in the workcenter, and after some inprocessing they all

head off base in their battle dress uniforms for lunch at a sit-down restaurant. Airman Newbie seems confused. He remembers being told that BDUs should only be worn off base for short convenience stops or to fast food restaurants and establishments where similar attire is worn.

No worries, because according to the sponsor, this is the "real Air Force" and Airman Newbie needs to forget all that stuff he/she was taught up until this point in his/her short, yet structured, career.

If this seems far-fetched to you, wake up! It happens every day, and that is where we fail our young Airmen. So, how do we fix this problem?

First, start our Airmen off on the right foot. Be a great sponsor to them; help them get settled into their new surroundings; turn challenges into opportunities.

Tell them that although they will be extremely busy, they will be contributing to an organization that has an outstanding reputation and work ethic, and we need them to give 100-percent effort if we hope to maintain our reputation.

Next, ensure they understand their role in the upgrade training process. Make sure they know who to contact if they are having trouble understanding; surround them with successful Airmen. And, follow up on their progress.

Third, lead by example. Ensure you are in compliance with dress and appearance standards. Make sure you are living up to the roles and responsibilities for your current grade, as they are outlined in Air Force guidance.

Finally, help them understand they are Airmen 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and 365 days a year. That means 100 percent compliance with standards, 100 percent of the time, not just when they are at their workcenter.

If, after all this, one of your Airmen still does not get it, then help him/her out the gate, and back into civilian life. You can do so with your head held high, knowing you were the solution, not a part of the problem.



## The Cornerstone

An indispensable and fundamental basis

The Cornerstone Page is devoted to those who support junior enlisted, NCOs, CGOs and spouses. It's to share advice, ideas and opinions dealing with life in the Air Force and Aviano. It's also a forum to recognize those around us. The Cornerstone Page will also offer Air Force trivia and facts.

**Submission info:** We want to hear from you. Flex your writing talents and share your thoughts with us and the community.

**Commentaries:** Writers can send commentaries to [vigileer@aviano.af.mil](mailto:vigileer@aviano.af.mil). Commentaries must be 500 to 700 words. Topics must be applicable to the Air Force, Aviano and appeal to the general public. For questions or concerns, call the Vigileer at Ext. 7344.

**Kudos:** Aviano members can send congratulatory messages to [Vigileer@aviano.af.mil](mailto:Vigileer@aviano.af.mil). Messages can be submitted for appreciation, retirements, awards, good service, promotions and graduations. For questions or concerns, call the Vigileer at Ext. 7344.

**Deadline:** The deadline for submitting information is close of business Thursday one week prior to publication. Faxed articles will not be accepted by the staff. The public affairs office is in Bldg. 1360, Room 19.

## Recognizing The World's Finest

• Congratulations to Staff Sgt. Francisco Sierra, 31st Civil Engineer Squadron; Senior Airman Alexis Alexander, 31st Medical Group; and Airman 1st Class Ryan Kowalczyz, 603rd Air Control Squadron, for their outstanding Career Development Course completion.

• Congratulations to the winners of the 2006 Aviano Youth Talent Show held March 11 at the community center. Twenty-five acts participated in categories such as instrumental combo, dance, female vocalist and instrumental solo. The winners are now eligible to compete in the regional competition held at Spangdahlem air base, Germany. The winners are: Elisa Diaz, who was best in show in the 6- to 11-year-old category and Daniel Riley, who was best in show in the 12- to 18-year-old category; Makenna Reaves, Tyler Day and Dominic Pedrotty took first place in instrumental combo and Dylan Hillestad, Sebastian Galloway, Maygan Eldridge, Emily Shingler and Berry Johnson took second place in instrumental combo; Katherine Barber and Michelle Navarro took first place in dance; Rachele Tucker took second place in dance; Elisa Diaz took first place in female vocalist and Ashley Radke took second place in female vocalist; Daniel Riley took first place in instrumental solo and Morgan Ford took second place in instrumental solo.

• Congratulations to Tech. Sgt. Joseph Santiago, 31st Logistics Readiness Squadron, who was named Air Force Logistics Plans NCO of the Year for 2005.

• Congratulations to the Air Forces Office of Special Investigations, Detachment 531, which was named U.S. Air Forces in Europe OSI Large Detachment of the Year for 2005.